

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9205
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 5958

CINCPAC: FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, AF
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN COMMENTS ON DECISION-MAKING IN
AFGHANISTAN

1. DURING A CALL ON AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAFIZULLAH AMIN JULY 20, I ASKED HIM A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF AFGHANISTAN (PDPA), AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DECMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA).

2. AMIN, WHO IS ALSO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF THE DRA AND SECRETARY TO THE SECRETARIAT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PDPA, EXPLAINED THAT THE PDPA IS DIRECTED BY ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHICH HE SAID MEETS ABOUT ONCE A MONTH. HE SAID THAT THE POLITICAL BUREAU (POLITBURO) OF THE PARTY, WHICH MEETS WEEKLY, MADE POLICY DECISONS FOR THE COUNTRY WHEN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WAS NOT IN SESSION.

3. AMIN TOLD ME THAT THE POLITBOURO HAD NINE MEMBERS. IN RESPONSE
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TO A QUESTION, HE SAID THAT NOOR AHMAD NOOR (THE PARCHAMIST "EXILED" TO THE AFGHAN AMBASSADORSHIP AT WASHINGTON) IS STILL A MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO. (COMMENT: IF BABRAK KARMAL, WHO WAS EXILED TO THE EMBASSY AT PRAGUE, IS ALSO STILL AMEMBER, THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THERE ARE SEVEN ACTIVE TOP DECISION-MAKERS IN KABUL AT PRESENT. SINCE DPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE MIR MEHRABUDDIN PAKTIAWAL RECENTLY TOLD ME THAT GENERAL QADER IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO (WE

HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT NO MILITARY MEN ARE ON THE POLITBURO), BUT THAT THE MINISTERS OF PUBLIC HEALTH, PLANNING, AND AGRICULTURE ARE MEMBERS, WE WOULD GUESS AT THIS TIME THAT, IN ADDITION TO TARAKI AND AMIN, THE FOLLOWING ARE PROBABLY MEMBERS: MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH SHAH WALI, MINISTER OF EDUCATION DASTAGIR PANJSHIRI, MINISTER OF PLANNING SULTAN ALI KISHTMAND, MINISTER OF RADIO AND TELEVISION SULAIMAN LAIQ, AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE SALEH MOHAMMAD ZIRI. PANJSHIRI AND LAIQ ARE INCLUDED BECAUSE OF THEIR RANK-ORDER POSITIONS ON THE OFFICIAL LIST OF CABINET OFFICERS PROVIDED TO FOREIGN MISSION. END OF COMMENT.)

4. AMIN CLAIMED THAT POLITBURO POLICY DECISIONS ARE NOT IMPOSED FROM ABOVE UPON THE CABINET, THE "EXECUTIVE ELEMENT" OF THE GOVERNMENT, OR THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL, THE "LEGISLATIVE ORGAN" OF THE DRA. HE EXPLAINED THAT SUCH POLITBURO DECISIONS INSTEAD PASS THROUGH THE PARTY APPARATUS OF THE PDPA TO THE OFFICIALS OF THE CABINET AND THE COUNCIL, ALL OF WHOM ARE PARTY MEMBERS AND RESPOND TO ITS WISHES.

5. COMMENT: AMIN'S EXPLANATIONS TEND TO CONFIRM OUR EARLIER OBSERVATIONS THAT A VERY SMALL, TIGHTLY ORGANIZED GROUP OF INTER PARTY LEADERS ARE RUNNING THIS COUNTRY. DAY-TO-DAY POLICY DECISIONS APPEAR TO BE MADE ON THE POLITBURO LEVEL. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT IT MEETS AS NECESSARY, AND MORE OFTEN THAN "WEEKLY."
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